

Reactions to Wilson's Appeal for a Democratic Congress

Taft Charges Wilson Seeks To Be Dictator

Wants Democratic Congress He Can Mould "Absolutely to His Will"

Says Republicans Have Given Aid

Ex-President Points to Crucial Time Ahead, When Peace Must Be Settled

By William Howard Taft
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PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 25.—The President, having put by, in grim times like these, the scruples of taste in his appeal to the American people for the return of a Democratic Congress, of course invites a respectful consideration and discussion by every loyal American citizen of what he says.

The appeal of the President is forcible but specious. The unified leadership he asks is autocratic power in fields in which the Constitution and principles of democracy require that he should consult other representatives of the people than himself.

In pursuit of his policies he consults neither his own party nor any other. He wishes a Democratic Senate, not because he would seek their assistance in the foreign policy to which by the fundamental law they are to advise and consent, but because he can mould them absolutely to his will without consulting them. He has visited his displeasure on every Democratic member of either house who has differed with him and called upon that member's constituency to reject him.

Does Nation Need a Dictator?

Is it necessary for the country's welfare that he should be absolutely ruler of this nation for the two years ensuing from March 4 next? That is the premise upon which the soundness of his appeal, in its ultimate analysis, must rest. Do we need during the life of the next Congress a dictator? One who knows the facts of this war, and our part in it, and who loves liberty and popular government, must answer no. The war is nearly won. It may take a year longer. We hope it will be less. The complex questions of the terms of peace are to be settled in the time of the Congress now to be elected. The still more difficult questions of reconstruction after the war are to be met by that Congress. Do the American people by their action in the next election wish to make both the terms of peace and the reconstruction after the war depend on the uncontrolled will of Woodrow Wilson? That is the issue which he puts to them in his appeal.

"Unless you give me uncontrolled power, you repudiate me and my leadership before the world."

Aut Caesar aut nullus.

Has Unprecedented Power

Never in the history of this country has the President had such vast and unlimited power as he has today. It has been often exercised through agencies selected by him without great consideration of the individual. Far too many instances of partisanship in the selection of these agencies are known of all men to give point to the President's disclaimer of thought of party in this appeal. The people have restrained protest against arbitrary exercise of power in their anxiety to win the war. The power which the President has was voted to him by the Republicans in both houses. They manifested no partisan desire to withhold it, in spite of the knowledge that it would tempt the use of it for partisan purposes.

The great measure for which the President can claim credit in this war are the two draft laws. He could not have secured but for Republican support. The second he did not initiate until four months after he had first rejected it and until after the Republicans and certain Democrats had proscribed for differing with him had forced it upon his reluctant attention.

Says Statement Is Untrue

But for the Republican Congressional support that he has had in this war the two draft laws would not have been enacted. He charges the Republican leaders with seeking to take the choice of policy and conduct of the war out of his hands by putting it under instrumentalities of their own choosing.

The difficulty with this statement is that it is not true. The mere mention of the name of Julius Kahn and his work in this Congress answers every reflection the President makes upon the Republican minority.

When the Republican leaders attempted to do what the President with an executive organization by which he might carry on the war more effectively. There was not the slightest suggestion that he was not to appoint those who were to exercise the powers under his supervision and direction. He did not wish to delegate power to his appointees sufficient to enable them to achieve what had to be done and so objected.

In the end he was driven to do in a more awkward way that which months before the Republicans sought to give him effective machinery to do. Thus the War Council of Mr. Baker passed into innocuous desuetude, while Stettinius and Goethals, first rejected, were given requisite power.

Alleges "Lamentable" Waste.

Thus Denmark was put forward, withdrawn, then another, then another and finally Schwab was given the unrestricted chance to waste the making of ships. To waste aviation, a lamentable waste and failure came first and then Ryan with requisite headship and authority is doing the job.

Wilson's Plea for Votes Stirs Heated Resentment

Roosevelt, Wickersham, Barnes, Hedges, Edge and Other Republicans Sharply Criticise President's Appeal as Democrats Call It "Fine Piece of Work"

President Wilson's appeal yesterday for the election of a Democratic Congress aroused resentment among New York Republicans, though Democrats thought well of it.

Some of the more conspicuous utterances follow:

Colonel Roosevelt—"The President's statement is an announcement that he is a partisan leader first and President of all the people second."

"It is, of course, a repudiation of one of his former statements to the effect that his policy was adjudged a statement which, of course, he has already repudiated by his action."

"I have no further comment just at this time, but will deal with the matter in my speech Monday evening at Carnegie Hall, after I have had time to read carefully the document which all good Americans will regard as the most lamentable piece of political propaganda made by a President during a great war, which has been heartily supported by all good citizens without regard to party, but which, so far as there have been party differences at all, has been more heartily supported by political opponents than by his political friends."

Leslie M. Shaw, former Secretary of the Treasury to President McKinley, says: "This is no time for divided counsel. If the word of Democratic members of Congress is to be relied upon, it is not his custom to take counsel from either party. He can be no divided counsel where counsel is not sought or accepted."

"It is contended that President Lincoln and President McKinley similarly sought to influence elections. The cases are not parallel. Although there were many notable exceptions, the peace was controlled exclusively by Democrats and pacifists, both opposed to the war."

The case is entirely different now. The Republic party was the war party in 1914-15 and 1916. It was the war party, as the vote shows, when war was declared, and the President admitted such a victory party to-day as his own.

"Long before 1900 every prominent Democrat had deserted President McKinley, and they were all opposing his policy of supporting the Philippines rebellion within the territory which had voted to acquire. This opposition was so universal and so vicious that McKinley's assassination followed."

"It is at this time that the winning party, Mr. Wilson's desire to stifle the free exercise of public opinion would be an act of desecration. In the judgment of a fair majority of the people, of his conditions of peace are inimical to this country, and their incorporation into the peace treaty would prostrate every American industry."

"The removal of all economic rivalry in binding form, which Mr. Wilson declares 'necessary to a sincere and secure peace,' can be accomplished in no other way than by granting Orientals as well as Germans freedom of domicile in this country and interchange of all products of labor with no tariff restriction."

"Free trade is just as obnoxious to the Louisiana sugar planter as to the New England shoemaker, and the American people will never allow it to go into the treaty unopposed. Mr. Wilson might as well know that fact now as later. It is more than probable that, unless the people do express their opinion, the peace treaty will be returned to a Republican House of Representatives, the President will feel justified in carrying out his avowed purpose to establish international free trade."

George L. Glynn, chairman of the Republican State Committee—"The country is loyal to the President, but it is not subservient to the champion of the Democratic national organization if he is to be a slogan, a political adjuvant, a government in its entirety, as the President is attempting to capitalize its patriotism."

Governor Walter E. Edge of New Jersey—"As a staunch supporter of President Wilson and his policies with respect to war and the international situation, I regret that he has made the struggle for peace democracy a partisan political issue at home."

"The American people will quickly perceive that the Congress to be elected next month, even if it takes office before the end of the war, will have more to do with the problems of reconstruction than the problems of war."

The intelligence which he says the European people have enabled them to see that an election of a Republican Congress will mean a more certain prosecution of this war to an unconditional surrender than the election of a Republican Congress will mean the cause of the country in this war abroad as a vote of want of confidence in his prosecution of the war."

Invokes Faith of Allies

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For reasons apparent to all, the real expressions of feeling in respect to the President's utterances in England and France are restrained. But when the torrent of American public opinion compelled a gradual return toward a demand for unconditional surrender the joy of our allies was unrestrained. They know that a verdict at the election for a Republican House will end forever the dangers which seemed to face a negotiated peace.

Instead of obstructing the President and our allies in winning this war and a dictated peace, nothing would so discourage the Germans and hearten our allies as the return of a Republican Congress.

In these circumstances, therefore, I cannot escape the logic of the President's assertion that unity of command is as essential in civil actions as it is on the field of battle, for if this were true our American doctrine of representative democracy would be unsound and the autocratic form of government against which civilization struggles would be more practical and desirable than democracy.

George W. Wickersham, former Attorney General of the United States—"The support the Republicans of the nation have given the President and his war policy would have been considered incredible before the war, and could not have been imagined. They have supported him when the members of his own party fled from him. The Republicans of the nation stood for war before the Democrats stood for it. If the President plans to negotiate a peace which the Republican party will not approve, then it is time for the Republican party to stiffen its ranks and elect as many members to Congress as possible."

Job E. Hedges—"Politics cannot be adjourned. The President's government is abandoned. The statement of the President would justify the conclusion that he did not trust his own party except in the matter of the war. The President makes it clear that what the country needs is a thinking, aggressive, mentally independent Congress, the one to aid him in the work to which the nation is committed."

Samuel W. Fairchild, president of the Union League Club—"Republicans of the nation and the Union League Club repeatedly have urged the President to the President in the war. Moreover, it is very easy to discover the record of Republicans in the Senate and the House. Republican members who have left either house since the war have left either house since the war. Red Cross or to go into the army, whereas such Democrats as have left have left either house since the war. This is no time for politics."

President Nicholas Murray Butler, of Columbia—"It is a plain attempt at political profiteering. The war is not an administration, but a people's war. Two of the greatest obstacles to the conduct of the war have been Chairman Kitchin, of the Ways and Means Committee, and Chairman Dent, of the Committee on Education and Labor. The only way to get rid of these two chairmen is by a Republican majority in the House of Representatives, and unless all signs fail that will take place, the war will be lost."

Harrison K. Bird, treasurer of the Republican State Committee—"I believe that Republicans, conscious of the meaning of liberty, will vote as they think best, for the glory of the commonwealth, the prosecution of the war to a quick finish, the imposition on the Huns of unconditional surrender, and the continuation of republican government."

Frederick C. Tanner, former chairman of the National State Committee—"The Republican State Committee of which Charles B. Lodge, a Democrat, is president and chairman of the board of directors, and of which James W. Gerard, a vice-president, has issued what it calls a 'roll of honor,' consisting of members of Congress who voted right on all of the eight measures which the Congress considered most important in relation to preparedness and the declaration of war. Of the forty-seven members on the roll of honor, four are Democrats and forty-three are Republicans."

Ex-Ambassador James W. Gerard—"President Wilson has so far led this country in the war with an efficiency that the German General Staff might envy. He has turned the tide of America and its great leader for guidance. At this critical time, is the President to be repudiated and the impression given to Germany that in spite of the war there are many here who do not favor those policies which to-day are in process of crushing out autocracy and all future wars? Opposition to the President means encouragement to Germany and a consequent prolongation of the war."

William Church Osborn, former chairman of the Democratic State Committee—"The Republican State Committee would regard the return of Republican majorities as a serious check on the President's conduct of the war, and especially on his conduct of the peace treaty. The peace treaty is a matter of the greatest importance to America and its great leader for guidance. At this critical time, is the President to be repudiated and the impression given to Germany that in spite of the war there are many here who do not favor those policies which to-day are in process of crushing out autocracy and all future wars? Opposition to the President means encouragement to Germany and a consequent prolongation of the war."

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Wilson's Plea for Partisan Congress May Be Boomerang

Effect, Many Hold, Will Be Opposite to What He Desires

Republicans Angry

Situation in Close States Said to Have Dictated President's Action

(Special Dispatch to The Tribune)
WASHINGTON, Oct. 25.—The effect of the President's appeal to the electorate may be precisely opposite to his wishes, in the opinion of many political experts here.

One rather bitter Democrat, who for obvious reasons did not permit the use of his name, commented upon the fact that the President said the Republicans were not anti-war but anti-administration.

"Does that mean the Administration is anti-war?" he demanded.

The joint Republican statement was signed by the chairman of the Republican Senatorial Committee, the chairman of the Republican Congressional Committee, the Republican leader of the Senate and the Republican leader of the House. It was drawn up in the office of Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, the Senate leader.

Point to Lodge's Standing

Republicans bitterly contended that it was not only the President's statement in opposition to the President's policy should be drawn up in the office of such a forceful champion of the war as Mr. Lodge, while the President was stating that a Republican party in either House might embarrass him abroad, as a repudiation of his leadership.

Mr. Lodge is better known abroad, probably, than any other Republican in France. It was one Republican Senator, "than any other member of the House of Representatives."

Europe Is Watching

"The peoples of the Allied countries with whom we are associated against Germany are quite familiar with the significance of elections. They would find it very difficult to believe that the voters of the United States had chosen to support their President by electing to the Congress a majority controlled by those who are in fact not in sympathy with the attitude and action of the Administration."

"I need not tell you, my fellow countrymen, that I am asking your support, not for my own sake or for the sake of a political party, but for the sake of the nation itself, in order that its unified unity of purpose may be evident to all the world. In ordinary times I would not feel at liberty to make such an appeal to you. In ordinary times the divided counsels can be endured without permanent hurt to the country. But these are not ordinary times."

"If in these critical days it is your wish to sustain me with undivided minds, I beg that you will say so in a way which it will not be possible to misunderstand, either here at home or among our associates on the other side of the sea. I submit my difficulties and my hopes to you."

"WOODROW WILSON."

ties should be adjourned. It is evident that he has been compelled to abandon this position, because defeat is confronting the Democratic party at the approaching election. As a last resort, the President has turned to the President's office is brought into play. The Republicans have published their estimates of gains in Congressional seats in the coming election. They estimate that the Democrats will lose in the states which give good promise of giving the Republicans control of both the Senate and House.

The accuracy of these estimates is confirmed by correspondents in Democratic circles, which actually concede Republican majorities in both branches of the next Congress. Many other conditions have combined to persuade the Democratic leaders that their party is likely to be defeated in New York and other large states, so far as state tickets are concerned.

This statement, therefore, is a last effort to save a situation which, in my opinion, is beyond saving.

"Certainly the record of the Republicans in both branches of Congress is sufficient to show that the Democratic support of all war measures. The Republicans are freely permitted to pay the great bulk of the taxes and to furnish apparently the larger part of the troops on the front lines. It does not seem unreasonable that they should be permitted to participate in the affairs of government."

This is not Wilson's war, or the Democratic party's war, but the war of the American people. Mr. Wilson needs all the help he can get, but he is, after all, only a part of the government. When it comes to peace the Senate must be consulted. No treaties can be made without the consent of the Senate, but I have no hesitation in saying for one, that the American people will have no peace except by surrender, and no economic arrangements that do not look first and foremost to the protection of American industry with a Republican Senate than with a Democratic one. Democratic majority prevailing in the Senate."

Representative Sloan (Republican), of Nebraska—"The President's letter to the Congress was a masterpiece of the climax of five years of ultra-partisanship, delivered to the country at a time when non-partisanship in the Executive would most become a chief majority of the present Congress. The Republicans have not hampered and will not in any way hamper the conduct of the war. There is no question that they are as loyal as the Democrats. But this is no time for divided counsel."

Senator Thomas, Democrat, Colorado—"The President perfectly expressed the view of the Democratic majority of the present Congress. The Republicans have not hampered and will not in any way hamper the conduct of the war. There is no question that they are as loyal as the Democrats. But this is no time for divided counsel."

Senator Knox, Pennsylvania, Republican—"I cannot believe that the American people can be persuaded that the success of the war or the loyal support of the President in the conduct of the war will be in the slightest degree affected by the result of the next election. To question otherwise is to deny the facts of history."

Text of Wilson's Appeal to Nation For Democrats

Continued from page 1

In the present Congress have unquestionably been pro-war, but they have been anti-administration. At almost every turn since we entered the war they have sought to take the choice of policy and the conduct of the war out of my hands and put them under the control of instrumentalities of their own choosing.

"This is no time either for divided council or for divided leadership. Unity of command is as necessary now in civil action as it is upon the field of battle. If the control of the House and the Senate should be taken away from the party now in power an opposing majority could assume control of legislation and oblige all action to be taken amid contest and obstruction."

"The return of a Republican majority to either House of the Congress would, moreover, be interpreted on the other side of the water as a repudiation of my leadership. Spokesmen of the Republican party are urging you to elect a Republican Congress in order to back up and support the President, but even if they should in this impose upon some credulous voters on this side of the water they would impose on no one on the other side. It is well understood there as well as here that the Republican leaders desire not so much to support the President as to control him."

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"The peoples of the Allied countries with whom we are associated against Germany are quite familiar with the significance of elections. They would find it very difficult to believe that the voters of the United States had chosen to support their President by electing to the Congress a majority controlled by those who are in fact not in sympathy with the attitude and action of the Administration."

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Senator Penrose, Republican, Pennsylvania—"It was only a short time ago that the President declared that poli-

Republicans Cite Record in Reply to Wilson

Continued from page 1

Alabama, at the head of the Military Affairs Committee, with Mr. Julius Kahn, to whom the Administration was obliged to turn for assistance, to take charge of and carry the first draft bill against Mr. Dent's opposition.

"They will put a Republican at the head of the Ways and Means Committee, as leader of the House, instead of Mr. Kitchin, of North Carolina, who voted against the war. They will give the country a Speaker who did not oppose, and would never oppose, a draft bill, and would never say, as Speaker Clark did, that there is precious little difference between a conscript and a convict."

"Although the Republicans of the House are in the minority, they cast more actual votes on seven great war measures than the Democratic majority was able to do."

"What is the record of the Senate?"

"On fifty-one rollcalls on war measures between April 6, 1917, and May 29, 1918, the votes cast by Republicans in favor of such measures were 72 per cent, while only 67 per cent of the votes cast on the Democratic side were in favor of such measures."

"Those were the President's own measures."

"Does that record look as if we had hampered him?"

"The Republican party in Congress has supported the Administration policies since the war with a unanimity and an absence of criticism unprecedented in party history."

Where They Differ

"There are some domestic questions where we should undoubtedly differ from the course pursued by the Administration."

"We should not, for example, fix a price on the farmer's wheat and leave the planter's cotton untouched."

"Another domestic question in which the Republican party believes thoroughly is economic preparation for the coming of peace, and it is clearly of the opinion that the Congress of the United States should not be excluded from that great task."

"This is not the President's personal war."

"It is not the war of the Democratic or the Republican party."

"It is the war of the American people."

"It is more. It is the war of the United States, of the Allied powers, of the civilized world against the barbarism of Germany."

"In this great burden and responsibility the Republican party, representing more than half the citizenship of the country, demands its rightful share."

"If the Republican party is entrusted with power in either, or both Houses, they will do everything possible to drive forward the war and hasten the day of victory."

"The President speaks of the necessity of telling the plain truth. That the Republican party in control of Congress would do, for they have no friends to shield. And they will do more, they will give all the money to the last dollar necessary to sustain our armies and our fleets; but they will check the waste now going on of the money given by the most generous people on the face of the earth."

"The President speaks of the effect of the election abroad. He says that there they understand the meaning of elections."

"They do and they will know that if the Republicans have a majority in Congress the war will be pressed with greater vigor than ever before. They are quite aware that the power of the Senate is equal to that of the President in the consummation of peace by treaty."

Newspapers Take Sides Sharply Over Wilson Vote Plea

Country - Wide Comment Indicates That Politics Is No Longer Adjourned

Comment of out-of-town newspapers on the President's appeal for a Democratic Congress follows:

Boston (Mass.) Herald

So far as the prosecution of the war is concerned, on which the President lays his emphasis, or the maintenance of American rights after its close, there is not one scintilla of reason for the election of a Democrat, or for a Democratic House or Senate. The argument lies altogether on the other side.

Baltimore (Md.) Sun

Politics is adjourned, or ought to be, so far as petty squabbling over personalities or trivial issues is concerned. There is no repudiation of that doctrine in the President's statement. It is asking for support, as he himself says, not for his own sake, nor for the sake of a political party, but for